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The Remnant of Christ's Ecclesia

in opposition to the Dogmas of
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A WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

and a warning against the deception in the last days
foretold by Christ

"Take heed that ye be not deceived"

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AT THE TABLE OF THE LORD
"GO IN PEACE"

Help and encouragement have been provided in our recent readings in I Samuel, Jeremiah, and Luke, as we seek to serve God more pleasingly, especially as the signs in the earth portend Jesus' soon return.

In I Samuel, we perceive David's circumstances before he became Israel's second king. Saul was their first ruler, selected by the Almighty, as they sought a king like the rest of the nations, failing to perceive that God was their king. Saul proved to be a man of fleshly weaknesses, motivated by his own desires and thinking, failing to honor God. As a consequence, the Almighty determined to remove him:

"But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee."

I Samuel 13:14.

As Saul realized that he would no longer be king, he would look with fear upon any who seemed more righteous than himself. David was chosen by God and was anointed by Samuel to succeed Saul. He was the "man after his own heart." Saul, perceiving this, became filled with envy and fear. David, with God's help, conquered Goliath, and the people honored him, saying:

". . . Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, . . . what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul eyed David from that day and forward."

I Samuel 18:7-9.

What was David's mind as he was honored by the people, yet had become the subject of Saul's wrath?

". . . David behaved himself wisely in all his ways; and the LORD was with him."

I Samuel 18:14.

To "behave wisely" gives the thought of being circumspect, or guiding self wittingly, with careful consideration of all circumstances. David looked to God, trusting in His word. He did not boast, he did not provoke Saul to anger, nor seek the rule over Israel as God had chosen, but rather, he restrained his own natural feelings. As a result, he prospered, for the Lord was with him. How difficult it is to trust in times of trouble or affliction, for we can forget

that God might be trying our patience, our reliance on Him, if we fail to be circumspect in our living.

As Saul saw David prospering, he tried to kill him, by hurling a javelin, by requiring 100 foreskins of the Philistines as a dowry for Michal whom David desired for his wife: Displaying his evil nature:

“... Saul saw and knew that the LORD was with David, and that Michal Saul’s daughter loved him.

And Saul was yet the more afraid of David; and Saul became David’s enemy continually.” I Samuel 18:28-29.

Jonathan, Saul’s son, “delighted much in David” (I Samuel 19:2), and helped him. However, he was not convinced that his father was determined to kill David, and asked Saul:

“... Wherefore shall he be slain? what hath he done?”

I Samuel 20:32.

Saul’s response was to throw a javelin at his own son who was defending David. Jonathan, now convinced of his father’s evil purpose, secretly warned David to flee. As he did so:

“... David arose . . . and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.

And Jonathan said to David, Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed for ever . . .” I Samuel 20:41-42.

By Jonathan’s love and loyalty, as he risked his own life, David was strengthened, lifted up, increased in hope — as “exceeded” means. In his “exceeding” he could “go in peace”, knowing the love of God, of Michal, and of Jonathan.

How grateful we are Brethren and Sisters, as we feel the love of one another in our times of trouble and fear. It can lift up, give the courage to face whatever may come upon us, with a stronger determination to submit to God’s will. All this helps us to more surely “go in peace.”

We have also read of the calling of Jeremiah, who was sent by God to prophesy to Judah:

“... in the days of Josiah . . . king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.

It came also in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah . . . unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the sons of Josiah . . . unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.” Jeremiah 1:2-3.

Jeremiah prophesied for 41 years to these kings of Judah, until the final captivity of Judah, ending the existence of the nation of Israel. The Almighty told Jeremiah:

“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”

Jeremiah 1:5.

As God sanctified (appointed or hallowed) and ordained (assigned) Jeremiah, He further revealed:

“... thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.”

Jeremiah 1:7.

Jeremiah was not his own, but was called of God, to go and speak God’s word to Judah, beginning with their king Josiah. What he said and where he went bore fruit, as we read of Josiah:

“... he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in all the ways of David ... and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

And ... in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, ... the king sent Shaphan ... the scribe, to the house of the LORD ...”

II Kings 22:2-3.

The king’s desire was to repair the house of the Lord. This occurred in the 18th year of his reign, five years after Jeremiah had been sent to Judah. Could it be that Josiah began this faithful work as a result of Jeremiah’s witnessing? As they repaired the temple, the book of the law was found and read before Josiah. In the fear of the Lord, the king sent to Huldah the prophetess, concerning all that was written in the law. She told Josiah of the evil to come upon Judah because of their turning to idols rather than worshipping God. However, to Josiah she said:

“Because thine heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me, I also have heard thee, saith the LORD.

Behold therefore, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered into thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil which I will bring upon this place ...”

II Kings 22:19-20.

Josiah, in fear, helped by God through Jeremiah and Huldah, restored the true worship of God, and he did go to his grave in

peace, not seeing the destruction to come upon Jerusalem, due to the evil reign of his three sons who reverted to the worship of idols.

Jeremiah, in his 41 years of witnessing to Judah, saw all the evil that came upon them, including their end at the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. We read of his grief in Lamentations. As he remained in Judah after the captivity, some of Judah asked him to pray for their guidance:

“Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the LORD our God, even for all this remnant; . . .

That the LORD thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.”

Jeremiah 42:2-3.

The prophet did pray, and God answered, requiring these few to remain in Judah, trusting in God and not fleeing to Egypt to escape Nebuchadnezzar’s wrath. The people refused to heed God’s admonition and went to Egypt — Jeremiah, at God’s command, going with them. Those who fled to Egypt perished there, as Nebuchadnezzar conquered Egypt. What tribulation Jeremiah endured, as he faithfully witnessed in obedience to God’s command. He knew God’s hand upon him, delivering him in his every circumstances. Would not this hand of the Almighty give him assurance, peace of mind, to go about his ordained work of being a “prophet unto the nations”?

Let us, Brethren and Sisters, think upon the mercy, the guidance and assurance that is granted now in a measure, to help us as we determine to be subject to whatever He ordains for us, His remnant, in these last difficult days.

In Luke, we read of Jesus’ words to His twelve disciples:

“ . . . he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils and to cure diseases.

And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.”

Luke 9:1-2.

He further instructed them to take nothing for their journey, and to abide in whatever house they entered. Can we enter into the minds of those twelve as they realized what a great responsibility was given? For the first time, they possessed the power and authority of God’s spirit, enabling them to cast out devils and cure diseases. We can imagine their concern at leaving Jesus’ help and presence, being on their own for the first time; but God’s spirit was with them to provide and guide. Jesus would know their needs and further

instructed them:

“ . . . Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not.

But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.”

Matthew 10:5-8.

The twelve had freely received the gift of power and of authority from God, enabling them to do miracles, healing, preaching of the kingdom of God — even as Jesus taught: “. . . as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (Matthew 7:29). The word for “authority” is derived from two words (1) *ex* — out of or from; and (2) *eimi* — I AM — the name God revealed to Moses as he was sent to Pharaoh with God’s message: “. . . Let my people go.” This “authority” — power from “I AM” — enabled those disciples to go in peace of mind, knowing that He would provide for all their needs, if they in obedience freely used that power to heal and to preach the kingdom of God. How greatly comforted and assured the twelve would be as they were able to heal the sick, cast out devils, and witness God’s mercy and grace.

God in mercy provided for David, for Jeremiah, for the twelve disciples sent forth. He does and will freely provide for those who trust in Him in their living, in their work, in their subjection to His Word. As we face trials, afflictions, illnesses, let us recognize that God knows our circumstances, knows our minds and hearts. He freely helps those who in love for Him strive to please Him, by keeping their vows with Him in this spirit. “. . . All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient.” Brethren and Sisters, let us rejoice in that which He abundantly provides — helping us to walk in His way, doing so in the peace which is a part of His grace, so freely given.

J.A.DeF.

**“GOD WILL CAUSE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PRAISE
TO SPRING FORTH”**

In our recent readings from the 61st chapter of Isaiah we have been reminded of God’s plan for this good earth — a time of peace and righteousness to be ushered in by His Son at the beginning of the Kingdom age. Concerning this time, Isaiah prophecies:

“For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord GOD will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations.”
Isaiah 61:11.

This promise of “righteousness and praise” perhaps takes on greater meaning as we see many in this country waving banners, singing songs and wearing pins all proclaiming, “God Bless America” in light of the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001. There is a time coming when God will indeed bless not only America but all nations, and nothing man can do will prevent His purpose from being fulfilled for He has promised:

“I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Behold the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: **before they spring forth I tell you of them.**”

Isaiah 42:6-9.

Why does God tell us of His plan? Because He is a Father full of mercy and kindness, who gives to His children encouragement and hope to remind that all is in His hands, regardless of anything that man may attempt.

God’s plan will not be thwarted, in this we can rely:

“Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.”

Isaiah 41:10.

This is the promise God has held out throughout the ages to all those who walk in His ways — to those who have recognised the place of His Son as the Savior, whether they saw Him in faith before His birth, or can today look back and read of His perfect sacrifice, thus

becoming God's Right Hand of righteousness.

"I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me: That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the LORD, and there is none else." Isaiah 45:5-6.

Further prophesying of His Son, the Lord Jesus and his return as the Prince of Peace over God's kingdom, He says through His prophet Isaiah:

"I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways: he shall build my city, and he shall let go my captives, not for price nor reward, saith the LORD of hosts." Isaiah 45:13.

God's plan for a Kingdom ruled in righteousness by Christ and His saints, will remove the curse placed upon the earth, making it fruitful beyond imagination. His Son will indeed build His city — establishing the new Jerusalem as the capital of the entire world — the center of God's kingdom of righteousness and peace — to be ruled along with those found acceptable at His judgment seat. They are those who were once captive to the bonds of sin and death, but who now, through His mercy, wear the white robes of immortality.

Man contrives his own idea of righteousness, but if it is not from God it is not acceptable to the Almighty, as Israel discovered during Isaiah's time:

"Is it such a fast that I have chosen? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?

Is not this the fast that I have chosen? To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to the house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh?" Isaiah 58:5-7.

This hope is only possible through His Son, the only One to walk perfectly before Him and thus the only One able to repair the breach between God and man. Peter helps to define the hope established through belief in the Lord Jesus and how we can be known as His:

". . . The Lord is gracious.

To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious,
Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion, a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."

I Peter 2:3-6.

And not only to Israel, but to the Gentiles called in the hope of Israel, (spiritual Israel) is this promise of life extended through Christ, as Peter goes on to say:

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Which in time past were not a people but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

I Peter 2:9-10.

Peter goes on to speak of the hope made possible through Christ that was affirmed throughout prophecy, as an encouragement and an assurance for those who believe in His second coming:

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit," II Peter 1:19-21.

His word given through His prophets and apostles, has been preserved throughout the ages that we may have a sure knowledge of how we must walk before Him — and knowing that Word, we may trust that nothing that man can do, will deter God's plan with His people and this earth.

He has promised to cause "righteousness and praise" to spring forth before all nations when His plan is accomplished. Today, it is hard to imagine such a time, for we see so many nations and people who know not the God of Israel, and still others who serve a violent ideology they have created, while stamping it falsely with the name of God.

In this fearful time that has gripped the whole world, we knew His plan is in motion and will come to pass at the time He alone has appointed. Being privileged to know the end He has promised, let us again be inspired Brethren and Sisters, as we read from John of this time when a healing will go forth from Jerusalem **to all nations**, filling the entire earth with righteousness and praise of the Almighty:

“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the **healing of the nations**.

And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him.”

Revelation 22:1-3.

M.C.S.

THE PLAGUE

At the time of writing the world is very uneasy. A plague, deliberately introduced, has begun to show itself in various places. Anthrax can be a very nasty malady. If in contact with the skin, it can enter the body through bruises and cuts. If acted against quickly it can be overcome. But it is far more deadly if breathed in or ingested, and the distress of the victim is great.

Concerning the Arab peoples, Jeremiah gave a warning prediction:-

“Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.”

(Jeremiah 49:17).

The prophet then went on to say:-

“Because of the wrath of the Lord - - - every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.”

(Jeremiah 59:13).

Plagues were a punishment for peoples' disregard of God. In Ancient Egypt, the 10 plagues showed God's displeasure. One of the plagues was a “small dust in all the land of Egypt”, this brought boils and blains upon man and beast. Another plague was locusts

which "covered the face of the whole earth". These ate all the green things of Egypt. There was also a plague of lice which appeared out of the drying soil, to feed upon the people and their animals.

The situation that prevailed at the time of Moses is referred to in the Psalms:-

"He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them."
(Psalm 78:49).

In the original the word translated "an gel" means to despatch, and the word "evil" means bad or wicked. Dr. J. Thomas made an apt comment of what a scriptural angel can sometimes mean:-

"An angel, in a symbolic sense, represents a class of agents executing a mission to which they have been appointed."

The Locusts upon Egypt were such, as were also the lice and the irritations provoking boils and blains.

At the present time it is obvious there are a class of agents carrying out an evil mission, which is provoking mankind into irrational terror in some quarters of the globe. At the time of writing the following news has disturbed many people.

Britain said the nation was prepared for an attack (of bacteria).

Germany Tests were being carried out on a white powder (suspected of being anthrax spores) at the offices of the German Chancellor.

France Four buildings were evacuated in Paris, with over fifty people taken to hospital for bacteria tests.

Italy Police discovered and intercepted telephone calls of militants plotting a chemical attack in Europe.

Portugal A Lisbon street was sealed off, and several people taken to hospital after a package containing a white powder which was a skin irritant, was opened.

Switzerland In Basel, an employee at a very large pharmaceutical company, had to have medical tests, after receiving a suspect powder in a letter.

Lithuania In the capital, Vilnius, a newspaper office was evacuated when suspicious powder was found in a package with the word "jihad" or "holy war" scrawled upon it. Forty staff were taken to hospital. Beyond Europe other countries have been affected.

Canada The Ottawa Parliament was sealed off for a time, when an employee started with a rash.

Australia Suspect packages were found at state government buildings in Townsville; a newspaper office and a tax office in Canberra. Also at the American Consulate in Melbourne.

Precautionary action was to hose down workers thought to be at risk.

Hong Kong The Post Office has drawn up special safety guidelines, because workers have expressed fears about handling international mail.

Israel There was a degree of alarm when an undetermined substance was found in a cargo plane which had come from Europe, and was being reloaded at Tel Aviv airport.

U.S.A. The President confirmed that mail sent to the Senate was contaminated with the anthrax disease.

This news reveals a great unease, which is again underlined by further details in Britain as follows:-

In London Specially equipped paramedics raced to the Exchange when a suspicious package holding white powder was received. Twelve Exchange staff and two policemen were decontaminated with water and taken to hospital. Investigators wearing biological warfare protective suits took the parcel away in a sealed bag for investigation. Nearby businesses were evacuated as police sealed off the area.

Westminster (London) A second suspect package had been sent to Smith Square. This was disruptive to a meeting at the town hall, where the Local Government Minister was meeting with town officials.

Liverpool Fine white powder spilled out of a parcel which had been posted in the United States. Six workers were decontaminated and given antibiotics and 200 workers were held in isolation for five hours. The building was evacuated, until investigation gave assurance that it was not anthrax.

Chelmsford One of the nation's biggest postal sorting offices was evacuated when white powder leaked from a parcel.

Belfast People were treated with antibiotics after handling a package containing powder.

Fife (Scotland) There was alarm when a number of parcels were reported (falsely) to contain anthrax.

There have also been further reports from Japan; Taiwan; Czech Republic; Sweden; Bratislava; Slovakia; and Cyprus. Postal staff have been warned to deal with mail with "care and vigilance". Suspicious packages should be placed in a sealed bag or box, and that ventilation in the sorting office should be turned off. What a plague of fear has been engendered. What torment for workers in the field of communication. And what potential for disruption of

world wide international processes. It is believed that between 15,000 and 20,000 people from some 50 countries have trained at Terrorist Camps in Afghanistan in the last five years. This is a measure of the threat that looms over the world. These people are evil agents, prepared to carry out extreme measures. This kind of threat has never been seen on this scale ever before. Whether powerful nations can subdue it remains to be seen.

But one thing we can be certain about, is that these events are leading on towards a final fulfillment, when the opponents of God's purpose will bring a plague upon themselves:-

“And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.”

(Zechariah 14:12).

A BIBLE CLASS

“I am become like a bottle in the smoke”

Psalm 119:83

The 119th Psalm is known as the “alphabet psalm” because each verse in every section of eight verses begins with the same letter from the Hebrew alphabet. Each section also contains a common theme particular to those eight verses. The theme in this section from verse 81 to verse 88 speaks of “consuming”, since this word is used in the 87th verse as well as in the 81st verse in the word “fainteth” (meaning to consume).

Our consideration comes from the 83rd verse, as David in affliction cries out to God for deliverance. Being known as, “a man after God's own heart”, he turned to the word often to bolster himself in difficult times, and cried for God's intervention that he be not consumed by his enemies:

“My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word. Mine eyes fail for thy word, saying, When wilt thou comfort me?”

Psalm 119:81-82.

“All thy commandments are faithful: they persecute as wrongfully; help thou me.

They had almost consumed me upon earth; but I forsook

not thy precepts.”

Psalm 119:86-87.

Our particular verse under consideration then goes on to say:

“For I am become like a bottle in the smoke; yet do I not forget thy statutes.”

Psalm 119:83.

We have to remember that a “bottle” as we think of it today — most often made from glass, was not available during David’s time. In fact that word bottle, as used here, refers to a skin, or container made from leather and used to hold liquids. It had to be skillfully prepared — tanned and cured in order to become waterproof and thus able to hold liquid. Leather waterskins once made, were then carefully treated and frequently oiled so as to remain pliable and not dry or crack from exposure to heat or wear. A “bottle” or waterskin would be useless if left by the heat or smoke — it would soon wither and crack from the heat and become useless.

This is how David felt — like an old bottle, dried up and ready to perish as he was consumed by the fire of affliction. Yet through it all he was able to turn to God’s word as an anchor of hope, trusting in His salvation.

Job, who also suffered great affliction, wrote in much the same manner saying:

“My skin is black upon me, and my bones are burned with heat.

My harp also is turned to mourning, and my organ into the voice of them that weep.”

Job 30:30-31.

The prophet Jeremiah, speaking of Israel’s perishing situation, describes them in a similar way, as being dry and without life:

“Their visage is blacker than a coal; they are not known in the streets: their skin cleaveth to their bones; it is withered, it is become like a stick.”

Lamentations 4:8.

David had many adversaries who persecuted him, perhaps out of jealousy for his position. Yet at times his own flesh became an adversary, when he failed in the matter of Bathsheba and with numbering Israel. Faced with his own human frailty, he must have felt (as do we all at times), cast down or depressed in the face of his own failure, when he wrote:

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”

Psalm 43:4.

The heat of the fire of affliction is not pleasant to the flesh, but it can be a source of strength and renewal of the spirit in those who

will turn to God in such times. This was the spirit of David — one who struggled not to trust in the strength of his own arm, but considered himself as a “bottle in the smoke”, except for the saving grace extended through God’s word.

M.C.S.

A RELIGIOUS TREND

A report from Scientists recently warned that even with great precautionary expenditures, chemical sensors in every big city might not be able to protect civilians from a large-scale bio-terrorist attack. There has been a reluctance to discuss the potency of chemical or biological weapons, after the panic over the anthrax scare. Government officers have been discussing what to do if the worst occurs. There are, of course, sensors using lasers to discover whether there are more particles present in the environment than usual; if there is an abnormal reading this could indicate signs of a biological attack. But this would already be too late to protect some of the people. Britain has stocks of vaccine for anthrax and smallpox, but there are other deadly diseases which can kill within hours. There are plans for the erecting of temporary buildings to provide shelter for those affected, and also standpipe facilities to hose down victims of chemical attacks. These would have to undress and walk along a line to be doused, after which they would be provided with robes while their clothes would be decontaminated (if possible).

Modern chemical development has resulted in poisons that are amazingly toxic. Reservoirs supplying water to the cities could be vulnerable, as they are often situated in remote places.

The possible weapons terrorists now have at their disposal, has alarmed the world. There has been an increase in church attendance as the public becomes aware of the increase of danger to daily life, though as yet there has been no great effect. One example of this was seen at Exeter Cathedral where 800 people went to evensong compared with a usual congregation of 150. York Minster has seen a 50 per cent increase in attendance, and Winchester Cathedral has had an increase of 60 per cent. The feeling of threat, causing social anxiety, is further engendered by precautionary measures that have been taken in important buildings, where workers have been informed that they are governed by a permanent

heightened alert. In their alarm people are turning to religion; as a result, for example, in the United States, there has been a considerable demand for copies of The Bible, and also for The Koran; so the demand has outstripped supply.

A leader of the Anglican Church, in Britain, was reported to have knelt in front of his congregation, and expressed the following prayer:-

"We have come together in our Father's presence to bring before him the needs of the world. That, at this time of tension and fear, evil may be averted, justice be established and harmony restored."

The congregation then joined together in the prayer:-

"Almighty God, King and Judge of all mankind, look in pity upon the nations oppressed by strife, bitterness and fear. We acknowledge our share in the sins which have brought us so often to the brink of destruction. May your goodness lead us to repentance, that we may yet be spared."

It is, of course, a situation similar to that as described so succinctly by Dr. J. Thomas, who wrote:-

"- - - the clergy and their 'churches' of all their 'Names and Denominations' - - - neither believe his promises, nor obey his will. They are all 'miserable sinners' self confessed; and while they glory in the honor mutually bestowed, they are regardless of the honor that comes 'from God only'. Therefore they do not and cannot believe. (John 5:44)."

However, for the present, the change of direction towards the religious does indicate how the peoples will ultimately respond:-

"- - - when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness." (Isaiah 26:9).

SIGNS OF HIS COMING

"Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them - - - ."

(Ezekiel 38:5).

There has been quite an outcry in the Muslim World about the attacks by the U.S. and Britain on Afghanistan because of that nation's support of the terrorist organisation which planned and carried out the destruction of the Trade Centre in New York which killed over 5000 people.

From Pakistan came the complaint of the Afghan envoy, "These brutal attacks (by the U.S. and Britain) are terrorist acts." The Pakistan government made the comment that "it hoped the strikes would be brief and targeted, to avoid civilian casualties." Iran voiced criticism that the attacks were "unacceptable". And the Iraqi leader, hot with indignation, said they were "aggression contrary to international law". Even in Britain, the General secretary of the Islamic party of Britain raised his voice in condemnation, saying, "I think the reaction among Muslims is that this is outrageous. This is a vengeful act."

All this is evidence, that many in the Muslim World, sympathise with their fellow Muslims, even though some of their fellows have been involved in allowing, or even supporting, fanatics who have no regard for human life.

How significant was the defiant response of one of the terrorist leaders who said:-

"He who God guides will never lose and I believe there is only one God, and I declare I believe there is no prophet but Muhammad.

What America is tasting today is something very little of what we have tasted for decades. Our nation has tasted this humility for 80 years. Our sons are killed and nobody answered the call.

And when God has guided a group of Muslims to be at the forefront and destroyed America, I wish God would lift their position.

And when those people have retaliated to what their brothers and sisters have suffered in Palestine and Lebanon, the whole world has been shouting.

There are civilians and innocent children being killed every day in Iraq without any guilt, and we never hear any fatwah from the clergymen or the governments.

Every day we see the Israelis going into other countries and never see anyone objecting to that. - - - But when the forces came to America after 80 years, then the whole world is crying. - - - But they supported the murderers against the victims, so that is giving them back what they deserved. I think the matter is very clear - - - the officials in America led by the head of the infidels - - - came out with the men and equipment and they even encouraged countries claiming to be Muslims against us, so we ran to our religion. They came

out to fight Islam with the claim of fighting terrorism. --- This has to split the whole world into two camps. The camp of the believers and the disbelievers. So every Muslim shall support his religion. Now the winds of change have blown up and come to the Arabian Peninsula and to America."

Many Muslims have been listening intently to such words as these, particularly in Iran and Iraq. The U.S. and Britain have been endeavouring to counter this propaganda by food reliefs to the poor people of Afghanistan, and by continually insisting that their war is not against the Muslim world.

This counter propaganda is only succeeding in part. Criticism of the U.S. still continues in the Arab world; and of course the anti-Jewish inclination of Arab peoples persists.

It is the beginning of Great Power alignments. The Muslim World is strongly bound together by its religion. It will largely hold to Mohammedism which has such a strong influence that it causes the believers to pray five times daily preceded by ablution. This has to be done on rising, at noon, in mid-afternoon, after sunset and before retiring, and the face of the worshipper is to be turned in the direction of Mecca. At the keeping of the fast of Ramadan, described as the holy month, Muslims neither eat nor drink between sunrise and sunset. The Muslim has also, at least once in his life, if at all possible, to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, the place so connected with Mohammed. Such obedience shows this religion's power.

The present world situation ensures the U.S. and Israel remain in close co-operation, whereas eastern countries of Muslim persuasion take a united opposite position.

The prophecy of Ezekiel shows that a Northern Power strike against Israel will have the support of Muslim countries. For with that northern foe, the scripture declares, will be "Persia (Iran), Ethiopia and Libya." And the power, in this context, in a war of resistance, in support of Israel will be "--- the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof. - - -" (Ezekiel 38:13). A very appropriate prophetic description of latter day America and Britain. So the world moves on towards that final alignment of the nations into two great and opposing camps, which will bring about heavenly intervention on behalf of the establishing of God's ancient people, according to his purpose.

LETTER FROM S.W.

One of our readers has written with the following comments (extracted from the letter received).

"- - - my view of his (Dr. J. Thomas') writings. They are stilted, archaic and totally unreadable. - - - To be scholarly but without readability is self defeating. It makes one feel superior to others, but others just turn away — not able to understand them.

The whole message to Christ's people is that Christ is God's only begotten son. That Christ came to earth to teach all who would listen. God's message of love and of the Kingdom to come. Christ's parables are in the language of the people - - - talking to them with examples they can understand. The Christadelphian's messages are written as a PhD scholar would speak in a language that is awkward and archaic.

Please consider what I am saying. I have tried to share with others not in the truth — God's and Christ's wonderful message by giving them a copy of your magazine. As well as other materials put out by the Christadelphians — and they have been polite — "But no thanks, we can't understand it."

Our correspondent, we feel, is overlooking, where Dr. J. Thomas is concerned, the two aspects of his work. With Elpis Israel, for example, he endeavoured to focus on the simple Truth of the scripture's message. Later the Doctor applied his energies in the exposition of the book of Revelation, which we of course admit was a scholarly work. But it was a work in keeping with scriptural advice. It is prudent to keep the following in the forefront of our minds:-

"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.

For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe.

But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:12-14).

So, of course, any not conversant with the Truth and therefore with the "meat" of the truth, would not be able to take it in. For them

it is the simple "milk" that is needful, through which, if there is a responsive heart, there will be growth towards a greater, maturer understanding.

Our correspondent also raises a question about a previous article in The Remnant concerning Noah and the three wives of his sons. Dr. J. Thomas was quoted in that article, which endeavoured to show that all who belonged to the seed of Cain perished in Noah's flood. "The mingled seed of Seth and Cain (was) exterminated from the earth." Cain's race thereby becoming utterly extinct. Our correspondent's point is as follows:-

(It is) "- - - assumption that Noah's daughters were not under the curse of Cain. Genesis 7v7 says Noah's sons married and (he as a result) had daughters-in-law. Thus these were not listed as his daughters, could not be assumed to be free of the curse of Cain. - - - no where in Genesis 6, 7, 8 is there any mention of daughters of Noah and no such statement as the daughters of Noah being of the lineage of Seth. Dr. Thomas is completely in error when he states what is not in the scriptures."

We would respectfully draw the attention of our correspondent to what the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ shows. Luke's gospel record traces Christ back to Noah, to Seth and to Adam. It is given in the divine record to underline that Jesus is the seed of the woman, as promised in the Beginning:-

"I will put enmity between thee, and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." (Genesis 3:15).

This is sufficient proof that Noah's daughters-in-law were, at the time of the Flood, faithful women, one of whom was particularly involved in the process which eventually brought the fulfillment of the Deliverer, the seed who overcame evil, as represented by the serpent.

NEWS FROM THE ECCLESIAS

HAMBURG, NEW YORK, Corner Southwestern Blvd. and Pleasant Ave.

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.30 a.m.

Sunday Afternoon Class 1.45 p.m.

Midweek: Bible Class: Forestville, Hamburg and Fredonia

Every Third Week: Revelation Study

Our October witness directed to the general public addressed the terror, anxiety and perplexity created nationwide by the September terrorist attacks. In response to the question "What Is The Answer?", an article dealing with God's plan for the earth is offered. To date responses have been especially encouraging.

J.A.DeF.

MANCHESTER, *Ryecroft Hall, Audenshaw.*

Sundays: Breaking of Bread 11.00 a.m.

Thursdays: Bible Class 2.00 p.m.

Arriving at this New year we are bound to wonder what lies ahead for us.

One thing however is certain, God is very merciful and knows the needs of those who are His.

Letters of appreciation for this magazine continue to be received.